

OUT OF TIME

Issue No. 60 *Out of Control--Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners* Feb. 2002

OLSON IS SENTENCED; PLEADS TO NEW CHARGES

In a stunning development, Sara Jane Olson, formerly known as Kathleen Soliah, received a 20 year to life sentence, January 19 in Los Angeles for conspiring to place pipe bombs under police cars in 1974. The bombs did not go off. In the intervening 25 years, Olson took on her new name, married and raised a family. Olson was arrested two years ago. In December, she pled guilty to the 27 year old Los Angeles case.

Immediately following the sentencing, Olson pleaded innocent to a 1975 politically motivated bank robbery in which a bystander, Myrna Opsahl had been killed. Olson has long denied taking part in the robbery in Carmichael, a suburb of Sacramento. Four other former Symbionese Liberation Army members also face charges in the case; two of them, former couple Bill and Emily Harris, also entered innocent pleas in a Sacramento courtroom January 19. Bail is set at

\$1 million.

The SLA was a revolutionary group best known for the 1974 kidnapping of newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst, who later joined the group but could become a key witness in the Carmichael trials.

Olson's 20 to life sentence appeared shocking in light of her December guilty plea. Normally, a guilty plea will result in a lighter sentence, rather than what appeared to be the maximum available. Following is a statement from the Sara Olson Defense Committee clarifying what happened.

The judge declared that Sara's sentence under current sentencing laws was 20 to life, but the actual sentencing prescribed by law will be calculated at 5 1/4 years. With good time Sara would do half of that. This is a recalculation of the indeterminate sentencing laws before 1977. Sara is fortunate to fall



Photo: Sara Olson with long-time prison activist, Yuri Kochiyama

into this time frame in regards to what actually applies. The prosecution insists on being able to declare the current day sentencing as it would apply today. So it is confusing. The press clearly has no interest in getting it straight.

Because of the transition in the law the parole board may hold what is called a serious offender hearing. This is to determine if those who fall in this time frame of being indicted before 1977 and sentenced after 1977 are a present danger to the community. Through this hearing more time can be added onto the recalculated sentence. It would be illegal if the parole board gave Sara more time through this process.

Please write and support Sara:
Sara Olson/Kathleen Soliah,
Sacramento County Jail. 651 I.
Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Lori Berenson assaulted during move

Lori Berenson is an American currently being held as a political prisoner in Peru. After serving nearly 5 years in harsh jails high in the Andes Mountains, her conviction of treason against Peru and her life sentence were overturned. In June 2001, she was cleared of charges of being a terrorist but convicted of collaboration and sentenced to 20 years by a civilian terrorism court. Lori is 32.

At 3 AM, Dec. 21, 2001, while Lori and 17 other prisoners were sleeping, more than 30 police in gas masks and wielding clubs, stormed her cell block filling the area with tear gas. Lori was overcome by the gas, brutally manhandled and forcefully removed from her cell. She was carried semiconscious, wearing only a t-shirt and shorts, leaving behind all her possessions including eyeglasses, medicines and shoes. The prison she was taken to is on a mountain where the temperature drops to 40 degrees at night. Other women in the cell block were gassed, beaten and threatened with rape.

According to the official who brought Lori her possessions and Lori's lawyer who visited 2 days later, she is okay except for cuts and bruises.

Lori was moved for political reasons. On Dec. 22nd, media articles portrayed Lori in highly negative terms omitting the manner in which she was dragged from her cell. Justice minister Olivera has backing from the Fujimori-Montesinos supporters who still yield a lot of influence within the judiciary, military, police and penal systems in Peru.

After "sitting in limbo" for seven months, Lori's appeal to the Peruvian Supreme Appeals Court was finally heard Jan. 22, 2002. Dr. Sandoval presented Lori's defense to the five-member court panel. The judges will consider the oral hearing and are expected to examine all the files from the court case.

For more information, contact the **Committee to Free Lori Berenson, 320 E. 25 Street, #2AA, New York, NY 10010**. It is possible to write to Lori. All letters must be in Spanish so the guards can read them and the content cannot be political. Send the letters to the Committee. Visit the website: www.freeLori.org.

UPDATE FROM MOVE WOMEN

In a letter to OOT, political prisoner Debbie Sims Africa, of the MOVE organization reported on their recent legal setbacks. She also responded to our inquiry about the impact of September 11 on the MOVE prisoners. Debbie Sims Africa, along with other MOVE prisoners has been incarcerated since 1978, after a police attack on their organization. Mumia Abu Jamal covered the trial of the Africas, bringing national attention to their cause. Mumia was arrested in 1982. In 1985, Philadelphia Mayor Rizzo ordered the bombing of the home of other MOVE members, killing 11 including children. Debbie writes:

...As far as the September 11 attack affecting us, it did affect us in a very realistic way and dreadful aftershocks, because it made me think of my own family who was bombed, burned alive, on May 13th, 1985, by the US government, so I connect with what those people are feeling. The amount of people who died September 11 was a bigger amount, and so it seems like a worse situation, but still the same. Lives were lost in a terrible way, a treacherous way in both situations. We just thank our beliefs for giving us strength to stay strong, focused, and keep going, despite all the obstacles that are before us...

The MOVE prisoners continue to struggle to appeal their sentencing, but thus far their appeals have been denied. They maintain that there is evidence that Judge Malmed was biased against them both at trial and at sentencing, but that these facts have been ignored by the appeal judges.

Photo: Janine Africa, on left/front row; Janet Africa, left/2nd; Debbie Sims Africa, right/front with family



Out of Time
c/o Out of Control Lesbian Committee
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San Francisco, CA 94110



OUT OF TIME

Jamil Al-Amin Trial Starts

Formerly known as H. Rap Brown Jamil Al-Amin is known worldwide for his Black community activism since the Sixties, and is currently a national figure in the Muslim community. He is the Imam of Community Masjid, a mosque in the West End of Atlanta.

The trial for Imam Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, charged with killing a black sheriff's deputy two years ago, began January 6 in Atlanta.

In an earlier court appearance, Al-Amin stated: "I have been accused by the State of Georgia of having committed these crimes. Let me declare before the FAMILIES of these men, before the STATE, and ANYONE who would care to know the truth, that I am INNOCENT of the 13 charges that have been brought against me. Let me also declare that I am joined at the heart with his widow and her children at the loss of a husband and father."

According to NYT reporters, Al-Amin states that the accusation against him is the latest episode in a government conspiracy against him dating to the days of J. Edgar Hoover. He asserted that the government perceives him as dangerous because of his past association with the Black Panther Party and his current embrace of Islam.

Mr. Al-Amin is currently under an order from Judge Stephanie B. Manis of Superior Court restraining him from discussing the specifics of the case. **For More info: The National Support Committee for Imam Jamil, P.O. Box 14487 Greensboro, North Carolina 27415 Tel: (336) 852-0985 E-Mail: khalils746@hotmail.**



Still Alive, by Candy Anderson AKA Diamond Childe, Insider's Art: Context Collection of Artists in Prison

If I Get Out Alive Children Behind Bars

If I Get Out Alive is an award-winning one-hour public radio documentary narrated by Academy Award-winning actress and child advocate Diane Keaton. The program, the result of a one-year investigation, exposes the systematic abuse and brutality faced by juveniles in the adult prison system. It is available on-line at www.theinfinitemind.com/rafiles/getout.ram

Every day in prisons across the United States, kids are fighting for their lives. They're locked in mortal combat with adult criminals who are bigger, stronger, meaner and much tougher. Some kids will survive, and come out of prison with all the mean, tough survival skills that prison life teaches. Some kids won't.

If I Get Out Alive features first-hand accounts from children currently behind bars, rehabilitated youths who survived the system, parents of young people who died in adult prisons, legal experts, policy makers and correction officials. The program also addresses the abysmal mental health conditions in prison and jails faced by young people (fifty percent of whom, according to the latest research, are affected by a serious mental illness) as well as examining alternative sentencing programs that are successful in diverting young offenders from prison. The show is being adapted as a TV documentary in co-production with MTV.

PETTY HARASSMENT

Interruption of prison mail and visits can be a mine field. Letters, magazines, newsletters etc. can go through for months and then suddenly be rejected. The September issue of *Out of Time* was returned to us from a Texas prison. All previous issues had gotten in, no problem.

The reason checked on our form said, "...contains material that a reasonable person would construe as written solely for the purpose of communicating information designed to achieve a breakdown of prisons through inmate disruption such as strikes or riots.

A note added to our form explained that page 1 (of OOT) contained material of a "racial" nature. The issue in question had an article about the Dyke March, a picture of Linda Evans, a picture of a Gay Pride March in Tel Aviv attended by Jews and Palestinians and an article about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender prisoners facing torture in prisons around the world. Needless to say, we don't understand why our newsletter was rejected.

Penny, an OOCer, talks regularly with Tom Manning, one of the Ohio 7 and a political prisoner in Springfield, MO. They were talking about family matters and were suddenly cut off. Tom tried to call back but was unable to get through. Another phone call was interrupted by a series of tapping, Morse code type of noises. The call was terminated with no reason given. Tom then asked Penny to write her objections to the warden. She did. In this case, Tom was ultimately able to resolve the matter from the inside.

The moral of these stories is: if a problem occurs in mail, phone or visiting - DON'T do nothing and do follow up. Persistence sometimes works.

Is the US torturing the Taliban/Al Qaeda prisoners?

The Bush administration refuses to recognize the Taliban/Al Qaeda captives as prisoners of war, insisting on calling them terrorists. This may sound like a battle of rhetoric and politics - but behind this definitional struggle is a chilling reality: The difference between being held as a POW rather than as a terrorist is the application of the Geneva Conventions in general, and the rules regarding "interrogation" in particular. Under the Geneva Conventions, a POW is not required to give more than his/her name, rank and serial number, and no further questioning may take place. However, if a person is not considered a POW, the chilling reality is that all too often, "interrogation" is a code word for torture.



PLEASE WRITE TO VIEQUES PRISONERS

Please write to these prisoners for Vieques. The first two, the head and youngest son of the Zenon family of Vieques, were sentenced to 6 months in prison for misdemeanor trespassing. It was an obvious attempt to shut down fishermen who have been at the forefront of the Vieques struggle for a generation.

Carlos (Taso) is over 60, suffers from diabetes and heavy metal poisoning, and is losing his eyesight. His son Yabu is one of only two paramedics in Vieques.

Also keep pressuring the authorities to return Tito Kayak (remember his putting the Vieques and PR flags on the Statue of liberty last year?) to Puerto Rico. He has been repeatedly in solitary, denied visits, etc.

None of these men has ever been convicted of any felony or violent act. They have simply put their lives on the line to protect Vieques from bombs and other acts of military aggression.

Carlos Zenon: 23214-069-1B
Yabureibo Zenon Encarnacion: 23213-069-1B
MDC Guaynabo, PO BOX 2147, San Juan, PR 00922

Alberto de Jesús Mercado, 19580-069 (Tito Kayak)
MCC Manhattan, 150 Park Row, New York, NY 10007

Write to the warden, demanding that Tito be returned to Puerto Rico to serve out his sentence: **Gregory Park, Warden, MCC Manhattan, 150 Park Row, New York, NY 10007**

OUT OF TIME

SUSAN CRANE RELEASED

Plowshares activist Susan Crane was released from FCI Dublin in December, 2001. Susan is currently living with



her family and friends at Jonah House in Baltimore. What was her "crime?" Here is what she says about it:

On August 7, 1995, Steve Kelley and I went into Lockheed-Martin in Sunnyvale, CA, where D-5 Trident missiles were being built. Around 8:30 in the morning, we climbed over the fence, walked in the door, and looked in various rooms until we found sections of the missile being worked on. We used regular household hammers to begin to convert the missile, and we poured our own blood on the missile (which we had in baby bottles).

These missiles are flying ovens, and if used, would

Sundiata released from isolation Richard Williams in segregation

Sundiata Acoli was released from isolation after four months January 3. Acoli is a Black Liberation Army political prisoner who has been imprisoned since 1973. He was one of a dozen u.s. political prisoners who were held incommunicado after 9/11/01: no visits, no mail, no phone calls, not even to a lawyer. Most have now been released back into the general prison population. **You can write him: Sundiata Acoli #39794-066, PO Box 3000, USP Allenwood, White Deer, PA 17887**

Political prisoner **Richard Williams** remains in isolation all day, every day, with a video camera on him every time he leaves his cell, even to take a shower. Richard is an anti-imperialist captured in 1984. He and his co-defendants became known as the Ohio 7. We can try to pressure the prison officials to release Richard Williams from isolation.

Write a letter to the local congressperson, Lois Capps, asking why Richard was put into administrative segregation on 9/11/01 when he presents no threat to national security (having been locked up for 17 years), why he's still in isolation and request that he be returned to general population. Her address is 1118 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC: 20515 Fax: 202-225-5632. Also, write to Richard or send books (new or used paperbacks). Reading is one of the ways he is maintaining his sanity in isolation. **Richard Williams #10377-016. USP Lompoc, 3901 Klein Blvd. Lompoc, CA 93436**

incinerate human life. If I had lived during WWII, and there were a concentration camp near me, what would have been an appropriate action?? Should I just let people die?? There were many good and truthful actions that people took then, and I think we need to clearly see what we are doing today and decide what we need to do to resist the weapons of mass destruction that our government is building today.

Susan can be reached via e-mail at: disarmnow@erols.com or by U.S. mail: Susan Crane c/o Jonah House, 1301 Moreland, Baltimore, MD 21216

DEBI ZUVER DEFENDS HER LIFE; GETS 21 YEARS

On January 7, Sonoma County Superior Court Judge Elliot Daum handed down a 21-year sentence to Debi Zuver, a domestic violence victim who pled guilty to manslaughter in the shooting death of Kim Garloff, Zuver's ex-boyfriend. Garloff repeatedly beat, terrorized and threatened to kill Debi over a two-year period.

In handing down his stunning decision to give Debi Zuver the maximum penalty (11 years for manslaughter plus 10 years for using a gun), Judge Daum ignored the determination by an expert witness that Debi Zuver suffered from "battered women's syndrome" and acted to defend her own life.

The judge also disregarded the fact that only moments before the shooting Kim Garloff had threatened to kill Debi because she refused to give false testimony in his upcoming trial on 3 felony counts of methamphetamine production and sale. (If convicted, Garloff was facing 19 years in prison. Debi was his alibi witness.)

As Debi Zuver was packing her car to flee to a friend's house, Kim Garloff came into her house, locked the door, threw her down on the bed and beat her, threw her against the wall and made repeated threats to kill her.

Garloff then sat down on the couch and said, "Get me my goddamned gun." (Debi had been sleeping with the gun under her



pillow ever since she had told Kim's lawyer she wouldn't testify on his behalf.) According to Debi, she got the gun and walked across the room. "I was actually going to give him the gun," she said. "Instead I shot him. I know that if I hadn't shot Kim that night, I wouldn't be here today."

Despite all this, Judge Daum determined the evidence of battered women's syndrome was not convincing; refused to accept that the victim (Garloff) had precipitated and been the aggressor in the incident; and determined she was not acting under duress or in defense of her own life.

This sentence is particularly chilling in light of the recent dismissal of all charges against Petaluma doctor Louis Pelfini, charged with homicide and domestic violence in the smothering death of Janet Pelfini. Louis was Janet Pelfini's husband of some 30 years. Because of double jeopardy, Louis Pelfini cannot be charged again for criminal behavior in Janet's death.

As women's rights activists we are extremely concerned about the messages these two cases send to the community — messages like, "If you kill your wife you'll get away with it" and "If you're a battered woman you better shut up and take it because the cops won't protect you and if you dare protect yourself we're gonna rip your life away."

Letters of support can be sent to: Debi Zuver, c/o Purple Berets, PO Box 3064, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Mumia Abu-Jamal Update

On December 18th Federal District Court Judge William Yohn denied Mumia Abu-Jamal's request for a new trial. In denying Jamal's first and (by law) only federal habeas corpus appeal, Yohn upheld Jamal's murder conviction in the 1981 shooting death of Philadelphia Police officer Daniel Faulkner, while explicitly rejecting evidence of innocence and extensive documentation of multiple violation of Jamal's constitutional rights.

In this decision, Judge Yohn overturned Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence and ordered that the Pennsylvania state court either conduct a new sentencing hearing within 180 days (with re-imposition of the death sentence as one possibility) or in the alternative sentence him to life in prison without possibility of parole. Both the prosecution and the defense are expected to appeal the decision to the 3rd circuit court of appeals.

Mumia Abu-Jamal was convicted of capital murder on July 3rd 1982. He has been a resident on Pennsylvania's death row for the past twenty years. It is very important that people keep focused and aware in the next period. **Visit www.mumia.org for more information.**

Mumia has continued to produce prolific written and audio commentaries which are available at www.prisonradio.org. Also *All Things Censored* (Seven Stories Press) his most recent book of essays is now just out in paperback.



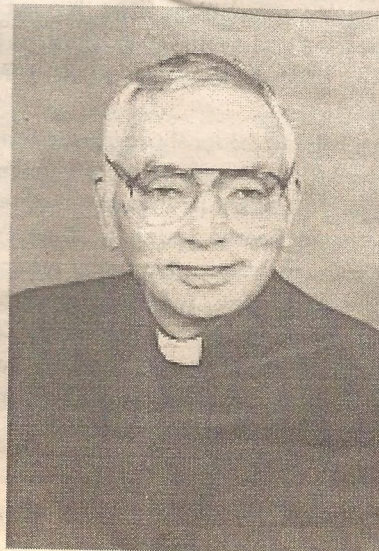
*Political Prisoner, by N.P.C. Alexander
Insider's Art:
Context Collection of Artists in Prison*

MICHAEL YASUTAKE MEMORIAL

A memorial was held January 12 in Chicago, for the Rev. Dr. Seiichi Michael Yasutake, who died in January at age 81. He was a long time prison activist, a pacifist and Episcopal priest. When he was 21, he refused to fight in WW II and his pacifism never wavered. He educated many people about civil rights violations against the Japanese living in this country and in the 1960's, he helped with voter registration in the south, marched with Martin Luther King and visited war resisters in prison.

Nozomi Ikuta, a minister in the United Church of Christ and the co-chair of Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project (founded by Michael Yasutake), spoke at the memorial and described Michael's activist legacy: "In 1976, as Director of Counseling at the YMCA Community College, Mike hired Carmen Valentine, a decision which would shape the rest of his life. In 1980, she was arrested as a radical fighter for Puerto Rican independence, and Mike spent the next nineteen years visiting her and the other Puerto Rican political prisoners and advocating for their release. In September, 1999, Carmen and ten others were granted clemency by President Clinton, a victory which never would have taken place without Mike's participation in the campaign for their release.

"But Mike's solidarity concerns did not end with the Puerto Rican community. It extended from Asia... to the Caribbean. In November, just a little more than a month before he died, he traveled to Guam as one of the organizers of a conference addressing the human rights concerns of people affected by Japanese or US militarism. Mike clearly loved and served his own Japanese community. But he also insisted on looking beyond his own particular community. For Mike, a neighbor was any one who needed his voice and heart in a struggle against injustice or oppression. Perhaps the clearest evidence of his unfaltering hope was in his insistence that the Church raise a moral voice, even for causes that were not popular or well-known. He was a fixture at General Conventions, introducing resolutions on a variety of human rights issues... most recently, one in support of the Black political prisoner and journalist, Mumia Abu-Jamal....



On the wall, by the entrance of a building important to Mike, there is a quote by Bertolt Brecht that describes Mike's legacy best:

"There are some people who struggle for a day, and they are good.
There are others who struggle for a year, and they are better.
There some who struggle for many years, and they are very good.
But there are those who struggle their whole lives and
These are the indispensable ones."

REGISTER NOW: POLITICAL PRISONER CONFERENCE IN CUBA



SUPPORT THE POLITICAL PRISONERS!

Come to Havana, Cuba March 26-30, 2002. TEAR DOWN THE WALLS will be an unprecedented international gathering on behalf of approximately 100 political prisoners and prisoners of war (PPOWS) who are currently behind bars in the United States. Participants from around the world are coming together to learn, strategize and join the fight to win amnesty for these men and women who are some of the longest-held political prisoners in the world.

Hosted by OSPAAAL, Organization in Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and sponsored by abroad coalition of U.S. based groups, the conference will shine an international spotlight on the United States' record of persecution of those who struggle for social change.

For a registration packet/information, write:
TEAR DOWN THE WALLS
P. O. Box 3585
Oakland, CA. 94609
or : teardownthewalls@lycos.com
www.thejerichomovement.com/teardownthewalls

Rachel Evans Fabens

The mother of Linda Evans, Rachel Evans Fabens, died January 16. She had been suffering from extensive cancer in her chest — breast cancer that had metastasized into tumors around her lungs, in her lymph system, and in her bones. Linda was in Florida, with her when she died and was able to help care for her the last week she was alive. OOC sends our condolences to Linda.

Linda will be working in Oakland starting February 18, with the Center for Third World Organizing. The project will be to develop a network of projects and organizations started by ex-prisoners, to advocate collectively against the discrimination faced by people coming out of prison and to train ex-prisoner activists in media, computer, communications, and organizing skills.

PRISON ART AND PRISON BOOKS

Art vs. Prisons: A Benefit for Mumia Abu-Jamal

8pm Friday March 15th, 2002
ATA, 992 Valencia, SF

Video Festival * Art Show * Poetry * Hip Hop
Art from Linda Evans, Tom Manning, Leonard Peltier, Laura Whitehorn, and more
For Info 415-824-3890

Books & Prison Art: Art Through Bars

Books Through Bars, a Philadelphia based prison group that sends books to prisoners, offers two collections of art by prisoner: *Contexts 2002*, a color calendar featuring works by prisoners. \$12, (3 or more, \$10), and *Insiders' Art: the Context Collection of Artists in Prison*, a collection of prisoner art. \$14.95 plus \$3.00 mailing. To order, make checks payable to **Books Through Bars, 4722 Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143.**

Inside Books: Texas

The Inside Books Project sends free books and literature to Texas prisoners. Many do not have access to books due to a limited or non-existent prison library and lack of individual funds. IBP is a 501(c)(3) non profit and exist solely on donations or grants. Most of the money goes directly to postage costs. To send money or to request books, write: **The Inside Book Project, c/o 12th St. Books, 827 W. 12th St. Austin, TX 78701**

HATCHER DENIED LEGAL VISIT

Eddie Hatcher is a gay, Native American political prisoner, incarcerated in Marion, NC. His work to expose government connections with the KKK and drug running has made him a target of government attack for over 15 years.

Maurice Geiger, a licensed attorney and the Director of the Rural Justice Center in New Hampshire has been denied legal visits with Eddie.

Geiger has a lengthy resume of service to the criminal justice sector and Eddie has a right to meet with him. Eddie is an experienced jailhouse lawyer, and is taking this issue into Federal Court. Eddie strongly believes this claim is needed to protect other prisoners who are being denied attorney visits as well as himself. To file this claim, Eddie must pay \$160 as a filing fee.

We are asking you to please rush a donation to the **Justice for Eddie Hatcher Campaign, PO Box 1234, Pittsboro, NC. You can write Eddie at PO BOX 2405, Marion, NC 28752.**